

STRICTURES
ON A
SERMON,
ENTITLED,

The Principles of the REVOLUTION
vindicated :

Preached before the UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE,

On Wednesday, May 29th, 1776.

By RICHARD WATSON, D.D. F.R.S.
Regius Professor of Divinity in that Univerſity.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

So that where God ſetteth the ſentence thus, *Thou lead-
eſt thy people like ſheep by the hands of Moſes and Aaron:*
might they have their wills, they would take the ſen-
tence by the end, and turn it thus, *Thou leadeſt Moſes
and Aaron like ſheep by the hands of the people.*

Bp. Andrews's Sermons, p. 279.

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D U B L I N:

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STRICTURES

DEAR SIR,

W I have lately had a very curious Disquisition
 printed and published here by Dr. WATSON,
 in which he takes the liberty to give you with a
 few strictures on it. There is something
 lately happy in the choice of the subject for the
 day. The Doctor you must know, is now man
 for a Word or two; he is not of the opinion
 of day, the day of the Revolution, to which
 case he is the University the principles of the
 Revolution. I perhaps ill-natured people may in-
 finite, that by this more was meant than meets
 the eye; that the Doctor had in view a remote
 Revolution, a revolution in the power from which
 we are now, but I care not, it was no such thing.
 Though the letter is dedicated to a Friend of
 the Duke of Devon, and though the Doctor
 is a very good Whig, I am persuaded he would not
 write the paper without some King William's
 motto, which is the motto of the Duke of Devon.
 I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
 J. S.

STRICTURES, &c.

DEAR SIR,

WE have lately had a very curious Discourse preached and published here by Dr. WATSON, *Regius Professor of Divinity* in this University, which I take the liberty to send you, with a few Strictures on it. There is something singularly happy in the choice of the subject for the day. The Doctor you must know, is your man for a *Word in Season*; he pitched on the 29th of May, the day of the *Restoration*, to vindicate before the University the principles of the *Revolution*. Perhaps ill-natured people may insinuate, that by this, more was meant than meets the eye; that the Doctor had in view a *complete* Revolution, a revolving to the point from which we set out; but I dare say it was no such thing. Though the sermon is dedicated to a FITZROY, to the *Duke of Grafton*, and though the Doctor is a very good *Whig*, I am persuaded he would not wish, like the disgusted Whigs in King William's reign, to recall the exiled family. No, no; when we are a little better acquainted with his principles, we shall see they are such as would not induce him to exchange one King for another.

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But the Doctor himself seems apprehensive that all is not right with him, and I suspect it will turn out so in the end. He says in his dedication, "that the Principles maintained in the discourse have of late become generally unfashionable," (the best news I have heard a great while) "and exposed the author of it to some little *misrepresentation*" (he was not willing to call it *just censure*) "even in that place;" (and why not in that place, if the Principles are exceptionable? surely the University is sound in its Politics,) "he conceives them, however, to be founded in truth" (here we differ a little) "or he would not have either thus publicly avowed them to the world, or inscribed them to his Grace;" and perhaps he had better have stifled them in the birth, for he does not seem quite clear himself that he has not conceived mischief and brought forth falsehood.

The Doctor in compliance with ancient custom, has prefixed to his discourse a text; but not with a view to raise any doctrine *from* it; no, beware of mistakes, it is rather with a view to raise a doctrine *against* it, for the text asserts, that *rulers are the ministers of God*, but the design of the discourse is to shew, that they are *the ministers of the people*.

This may seem a hardy attempt; but who is afraid? *A Regius Professor of Divinity* will make nothing of it. The Doctor goes regularly to work
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in attacking the strong holds of *Toryism*, Reason, and Revelation. To establish his favourite principle, that *rulers are the ministers of the people*, in other words, that *masters are servants, and servants, masters*, he maintains, that all men are by nature equal, and that God did not from the beginning institute any kind of civil Government in the world; for let these points be admitted, and his business is done, all government will then be from voluntary compact, and the supreme power in every state our sovereign lord the Mob.

“Mankind (says the Doctor) may be considered as one great aggregate of equal and independent individuals.” It may suit the Doctor’s purpose to consider them in that light; but he would be puzzled, I believe, with all his skill in history, to point out the time *when*, from the creation to the present hour, (unless Adam before the formation of Eve was his one great aggregate) mankind were in that state, and till he does, I shall think they may not be so considered. At present we all come into the world helpless and dependent enough, God knows, we are all likewise born under some government, and I shrewdly suspect it was never otherwise. At least there was the paternal authority from the beginning, and that was pretty considerable: the Doctor may remember what *Quintilian* says,—*pater jussit; hoc nomen omni lege majus est. Jus nobis vitæ necisque concessum*

cessum est. As to the observations on “the equal
 “distribution of natural good, our springing all
 “from the same stock, the earth nourishing us all
 “with the same food, our breathing all the same
 “air, and being warmed by the same sun; the e-
 “quality of our natural faculties and intellectual
 “endowments,” they might amuse the Doctor
 when he made them, but they serve no other end;
 for how does a child’s having as many eyes in his
 head as his father, prove that there is not “any
 “right to dominion on the one hand, nor obliga-
 “tion to subjection on the other?” And it is ra-
 ther surprising when the Doctor allows we all
 sprung from the same stock, that he should talk
 of natural *Independence*; for can there be a stronger
 evidence of natural *Dependence*? Does not the
 branch depend on the stock? And does its being
 nourished by the same earth, and invigorated by
 the same sun destroy that dependence? No,
 surely; and whatever the Doctor may think of it,
 the state of nature is not a state of independence
 but of dependence.

But it seems the Doctor is confirmed in his o-
 pinion, and led to the same conclusion by the ana-
 logy of nature. “Amongst the various orders
 “of beings, not one (he says) has yet been disco-
 “vered, in which the equality and independence
 “of individuals is not preserved.” I shall not
 dispute the fact with him; he may have studied
 animal

animal creation as he did chemistry (and let me add Theology) before he was chosen Professor of it. But what then? admit that a state of natural subordination does not subsist among brutes of the same species, does it therefore follow that no such state subsists among men? The Doctor allows the expediency, not to say necessity of government, and is it to be imagined that the Creator, who foresaw this necessity, would not institute government from the beginning, but leave himself without witness of his goodness, in that respect, to his creature man? However, if it is any consolation to the Doctor to suppose himself on a footing with the beasts that perish, let him indulge the pleasing speculation.

And can it then be really imagined, that government was not originally of divine institution? Yes; if we may believe the Doctor; for "God has not (he says) in the particular revelations of his will, delivered any thing subversive of the natural equality and independence of individuals." But I rather think it is the Doctor who has not produced all that is delivered; the veil of *Whiggism*, I am afraid, was not taken away in reading it. Let us however first see what he *hath said*, and then we will turn to what he *hath not said*. "When God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, *Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth*, his benediction" (says

(says the Doctor) "was general and equal to the
 "patriarch and his three sons." True, and
 considering, that of them the whole earth was to
 be overspread, there seems good reason for it.
 But what else would he infer? Though it may not
 subvert, how does it establish the Doctor's scheme
 of natural equality? Does the Doctor think that
 the Husband (I speak to them that know the law,
 the Doctor is a married man) is not the head of
 the wife, and that there is no obligation to obe-
 dience on the part of the woman, because the
 Priest's supplication for a blessing was general and
 equal, "We beseech thee, O merciful Lord, af-
 "sist with thy blessing these *two persons*, that they
 "may both be fruitful, &c.?" and does he think
 that no obedience is due from children to their pa-
 rents, because the benediction to Noah and his
 sons was to them and their posterities? the Doc-
 tor next observes, that, "when God further said,
 "*the fear of you, and the dread of you shall be upon*
 "*every beast of the earth, &c. into your hand are*
 "*they delivered*, he did not by this great charter,
 "under which man claims dominion over the o-
 "ther animals of the earth, give any one man
 dominion over another." To be sure, the do-
 minion given by God to man over the other ani-
 mals, was not the dominion given to one man
 over another, and I thank the Doctor for the
 discovery. But though it may not include, it does
 not

not exclude such dominion. The Doctor's claim to the title of D. D. does not give him a right to that of F. R. S. but it is no proof he has not such a right, for he actually is F. R. S. And is this all that is to be met with on the subject of dominion, in the particular revelations of God's will to man? It is all that the Doctor has produced, but it is by no means all that is to be found. It is the whole of what he has urged in favour of the natural equality and independence of individuals, but not the whole of what he might have urged to the total subversion of it, as we shall soon see.

With the Doctor's bias one should hardly expect him to deduce *natural inequality* from these words: *And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man*; but with the help of the Apostle he might have done it; for St. Paul infers the superiority of the man over the woman, from the woman being of the man, and not the man of the woman; he "suffered not a woman to usurp authority over the man, but "to learn in silence with all subjection," assigning this reason, *For Adam was first formed, then Eve*. So that priority implies superiority; consequently children are not equal, but inferior to their parents. To discover all this, in the passage before us, perhaps such assistance was necessary; but one should have thought, that a *Regius Professor of Divinity* might, without the help

help of an Apostle, have seen some foundation for civil authority in the sentence passed on Eve, *Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.* From that time, at least, the natural equality and independence of individuals was at an end, and Adam became (Oh dreadful sound to republican ears !) universal monarch by divine right. He was absolute lord of the soil ; the original grant was to him, and his children his subjects must hold under him. “ To fathers in “ their private families, the judicious Hooker “ observes, *nature* has given a supreme power ; “ for which cause, we see, throughout the world, “ even from the first foundation thereof, all men “ have ever been taken as Lords and lawful *Kings* “ in their own houses.” To this surely the Doctor cannot object ; for suppose a grant of land made to him and his heirs, when as yet he had no child (which was the case with Adam) would not he reckon it so entirely his own, that during his life, his children, which might be born, would have no right, but as they might by his pleasure hold it under him. And that in the design of Providence, the order of nature was to be observed, the succession to be in the first-born, we learn from the words of God to Cain—“ *And unto thee shall be his (Abel’s) desire, and thou shalt “ rule over him.* Upon the original charter then made to Adam, which was the foundation of all the civil government that has been in the world
ever

ever since, was grounded Noah's right of dominion over his family, which no doubt he exercised before the flood, as he certainly did after it, when, for his son Ham's irreverent conduct, he gave sentence against him, the curse although prophetic, being nevertheless authoritative. By this time, I presume, it appears, that much more is said in the sacred volume, on the nature and origin of civil society, that the Doctor saw reason to produce; that instead of countenancing his scheme of natural equality, it entirely overthrows it, demonstrating government to have been in the world from the beginning, and of divine institution: agreeable to which it uniformly declares throughout—*all power is of God*, and directs the obedience of children to parents, of wives to husbands, of servants to masters, and of subjects to rulers, to be *as unto the Lord*.

Seeing these things are so, the Doctor's system of politics is but “the baseless fabric of a vision,” a sick man's dream, of which any waking person would be ashamed. The natural equality and independence of individuals, he says, is the surest foundation of all just reasoning concerning the origin and extent of government in the world. But it is evident there never was such a state; it is an *ens rationis*, a mere creature of the imagination, which has no existence in nature; and how then can it be the foundation

dation of all just reasoning on the subject, or how can any reasoning be just that is founded upon it? Summon the Doctor's principle to the bar of reason, and it will not abide the trial; it can comport with the exercise of no authority whatever; confusion, not order, anarchy, not government, must be the result of it if pursued to its extent.

“ On the principle of natural equality, antecedent to voluntary compact, it follows, (he says) as an easy consequence, that there can be no just superiority of any one man, or number of men, in a community over the other members, but by the express appointment and free consent of every individual.” Now this is arraigning all governments whatever; for if the free consent of every individual is necessary to establish a just superiority, there is not a government upon earth possessed of it, for not one, not even the happy kingdom of Poland, can plead the unanimous voice of all its subjects for the establishment of its authority; nor, indeed, however confident some gentlemen may be, is there an instance to be produced in history, of a government founded by voluntary compact. And a revolution principle it is with a vengeance; for if none are to be governed but in the way they themselves shall chuse, there must be as many governments as there are different

ferent opinions, and as many revolutions as there may be changes of opinions. A necessary consequence this of the Doctor's principle, but not altogether so easy an one as he may imagine: for though he might be a good King, and govern himself according to law, he would not, perhaps, find it very agreeable to live in the neighbourhood of so many Kings as might upon his principle start up, all of whom would possibly be more for waging war on him, than attending to their own self-government; and to the best of my recollection, things did not go on very well in a certain country, when, for a time, there was no one particular King set over the people, but they were all Kings in their own persons, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Certainly then, a principle, so subversive of order and all good government, as this undoubtedly is, can never be the surest foundation of all just reasoning concerning it.

Another blessed effect of this principle in the Doctor's opinion is, "that as no individual can be compelled to give his consent to become a member of any civil community, it may be doubted whether he can be compelled to continue a member." One would really think that good people had their choice of coming into the world or not, for otherwise one does not

see how it is in their power to avoid becoming members of a community. They are not compelled to give their consent, because it is not asked, but compelled to be members they certainly are. For my own part I was dragged into society *nolens volens*, and I imagine the case of others to have been much the same. Parents are very apt to look upon children as the subjects of their little state, and Kings to consider them as members of their great family. Both claim a kind of property in them; they give protection at a time, when to all appearance they are little able to protect themselves, and in return expect from them the constant tribute of obedience; all which does not seem very unreasonable: and upon the whole I apprehend this is better for these independent individuals of the Doctor's, than if they were left under their own free and equal government. But admitting that a man has consented to become a member of any civil community, the doubt with the Doctor is, whether he can be compelled to continue a member; and he is inclined to think he cannot, "unless in cases of delinquency
 " against the laws of nature, or such laws of
 " the society as he himself has either explicitly
 " assented to, or tacitly acquiesced in, or unless
 " a perpetual continuance in the community
 " made part of the compact by which he entered

“tered into it.” If so, gentlemen are pretty much at liberty whether to continue members of the community, and be subject to its authority, or not; for few will be compelled to it, if all are free who come not within the Doctor’s exceptions. They, who think with him, that all men are by nature equal, may think that all their rights too are equal, and therefore they cannot properly be reckoned delinquents against the laws of nature, if on this principle they make the abundance of others the supply of their own deficiency, without always asking their leave for it. If no laws of society are binding to a man, except such as he himself has explicitly assented to, or tacitly acquiesced in, the number of delinquents against the laws of society will be considerable indeed; for very few men have themselves explicitly assented to them, and it is hardly fair to construe the silence that prevails on the subject, at our first appearance in society, into a *tacit* acquiescence in the laws, since no office is erected, at least as I ever heard of, where protests may afterwards be delivered in against such laws as meet not with our approbation. Then as to the other exception, I think we are all safe; for the Doctor surely must agree with me, that perpetual continuance in the community made no part of the compact by which we entered into it. An excellent principle

ciple truly, for just reasoning on government, that sets men so loose from all the restraints of it ! But still the Doctor is not so much at liberty in that respect, as he may imagine. Necessity, if nothing else, will compel him to continue in society, if he wishes to continue in the world ; and the society in which he is found will consider him as a member of it, whether he considers himself so or not ; at least it will consider him as so far subject to its authority, that in case of delinquency, the laws will be executed upon him, without first putting the previous question, whether he has explicitly assented to, or tacitly acquiesced in them.

A farther happy consequence of this gracious principle, as the Doctor informs us, is, “ that “ the authority of the supreme magistrate may “ be *limited*, according to the *mere good pleasure* of those who intrust him with it.” A very pretty system this indeed ! So then the supreme is subject, and the subject supreme ; the governors are the governed, and the governed are the governors ; and, to crown all, this free and equal no government is to the last degree tyrannical and arbitrary ; for all law is resolvable into the *mere good pleasure* of that supreme subject authority, which is higher than the highest. In the Doctor’s body politic, the hand says to the eye, I can see better than thee,
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I have no need of thee ; the feet say to the head, we are above you, we have no need of you. How different is this from the body in which God hath set the members, every one of them, as it hath pleased him ! And as upon the Doctor's consistent principle the supreme authority may be limited, that is, be supreme and not supreme at the same time, so " when
 " a civil governor (the supreme magistrate) violates the compact made between himself and
 " those who have condescended to be governed
 " by him, he forfeits all title to the distinction
 " (authority) which his equals had for certain
 " ends and purposes thought proper to confer
 " upon him." Now supposing such compact (but not granting it, for it is no where to be found in any government) who is to be judge when it is violated ? They who confer the authority, I presume the Doctor will say, not he on whom it is conferred. But will he admit this doctrine in family compacts ? Will he allow the wife, who, " for certain ends and
 " purposes," thought proper to confer the authority of husband on a particular man, and
 " condescend to be governed" by him, to be the judge when the compact is violated, and his authority forfeited ? And are children likewise, between whom and their parents we are to suppose a compact, to be the judges when it is violated, and the parental authority forfeited ?

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ed? The absurdity of this principle is sufficiently glaring when applied to families, and why not so when applied to kingdoms? *The law is made for the disobedient*, but if the disobedient are to be judges of the law, it is made to little purpose; they will always condemn the law that condemns them, and dispute the authority that enforces it.

“That Kings are not to look upon their kingdoms as private estates, which they have an unconditional right to possess,” is another consequence of the principle of natural equality as the Doctor thinks; “nor are they to consider themselves as superior to the laws, or their subjects as slaves, who are to fall down, like the idolaters of old, and worship the work of their own hands.” A fine idea really the Doctor seems to entertain of Kings! One should suppose from his insinuations that they were all a set of lawless merciless tyrants, who had not the fear of God before their eyes in any thing they did; and yet I do not see, why they may not act under the influence of that principle as well as the best of their subjects, nor why it may not restrain them from the wanton exercise of their power as effectually as the principle of natural equality and the fear of the people. Kings, it is to be hoped, may look upon their kingdoms as their rightful possessions, no less than
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the people may on their private estates ; and Kings ruling in the fear of God will not think of an unconditional right, they know by whom Kings reign, and to whom they are accountable ; and “ knowing whose ministers they are, they will “ promote his honour and glory.” And surely he who considers himself as the minister of God is not more likely to consider himself as superior to the laws, than he who considers himself as the minister of the people ; on the contrary, the law of his God being in his heart, it will be the rule of his conduct, and “ he will behave himself wisely in a perfect way.” So far from regarding his subjects as slaves, he will look on them as children, and he will be the father of his people, protecting the innocent and punishing the refractory, “ he will sing of mercy and judgment.” And though his subjects are not to fall down, and worship him, yet (as the Doctor may have read somewhere) “ duly considering “ whose authority he hath, they are faithfully to “ serve, honour, and humbly obey him,” “ not “ as the work of their own hands,” but as the ordinance of God.

“ These and many other equally important “ *truths*” (as the Doctor by a misnomer calls his *reveries*) “ concerning the nature of civil “ authority, were in his opinion, either not

“ generally understood, or not generally received amongst us, till after the Revolution.”

It might have been as happy for the nation, probably, if they had been less generally understood, and less generally received since that period ; for the minds of the people have been so poisoned with false notions of liberty, that they are become to the last degree presumptuous and self-willed, impatient of every the least legal restraint, despising government and speaking evil of dignities. But whoever examines what was written on the subject of government, prior to the Revolution, will be abundantly convinced, that these principles were as generally understood then as they are now ; and that they were much too generally received, the great rebellion in 1641 sufficiently proved. “ The people and “ Parliament indeed, in the time of Charles the “ first, seem, he says, to have comprehended “ the great outlines of civil *Liberty*” (or, more properly speaking, *uncontrouled licentiousness*) “ but imagining it would not become compleat “ unless all men were reduced to the level of the “ state of nature, they overturned the constitution.” This was carrying matters rather too far, even for the Doctor ; but they did no more than what their principles naturally led them to do, nor any more than what, the Doctor himself being judge, they had a right to do.

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Of all men living, he is the last who should complain on that score. He has determined, that "to the people is the legislature ultimately accountable for the execution of its trust ; the people are to judge whether it has violated the ends of its establishment ; the people have full right to resume the reins of government into their own hands ; the people have full right to purge the corruptions of the body politic in any manner they shall think most meet." And if so, if the people at large have this right, why are they to be blamed for exercising it ? But, it seems, the mischief was, "that by finally submitting to the daring usurpations of Cromwell, they brought the nation under a more debasing, and deplorable servitude, than ever it had experienced under the most arbitrary of its princes." So much worse by the Doctor's confession is *republican* than *monarchical* tyranny ; so much more to be dreaded is the *madness of the people* than the *wrath of the King*. As to submitting to the daring usurpations of Cromwell, the people at large, whatever the Doctor may think, were never intended to govern but to be governed ; and if they submit not to *legal*, they sooner or later will be made to submit to *illegal* authority, and for whips be chastised with scorpions. "They have not discernment to perceive, or leisure to learn, or steadiness to pursue the best,

“ best, or indeed any effectual means for guarding against the power and artifices of the few, “ they will be the dupes of designing demagogues; he who flatters with skill will surely “ make them stilts to his ambition.” But is it in the least surprising, that the abuse of liberty should, by the best judgment of God, be punished with the loss of it, and rebellion terminate in oppression and slavery? Is it not much more surprising to hear the Doctor solemnly thank God that we were freed at the Restoration from republican tyranny, and with the same breath inculcate those principles which destroyed all civil liberty, and introduced that republican tyranny? Let him not be deceived; if he sows tares he must not expect an harvest of wheat; the seeds of rebellion will not yield the fruit of loyalty: “ what a man soweth that “ shall he also reap.”

The miseries preceding, the causes under God producing, and the misfortunes following, the Restoration, are all too notorious for the Doctor to enlarge upon before the University; he would not, to be sure, pay so ill a compliment to their knowledge of English history. “ The misfortunes of the Stuart family terminated in the safety of these kingdoms; but “ God forbid, he says, he should insult the ashes “ of the dead, or the distresses of the living, by a “ minute investigation of their errors in government,

"ment, especially as it is not probable that the
 "subversion of the constitution will ever again
 "be attempted by the same means;" and
 God forbid too, say I, that he should not, con-
 sidering his patron's descent, have some re-
 gard to his tender feelings. "There are in truth
 "other means less obvious but more dangerous,
 "by which," he thinks, "as arbitrary a system
 "of government, as any now in Europe, may
 "in some future period be established among
 "us;" and that we may not entertain a doubt
 of its possible future existence, he presents us
 with a long string of possibles, like the tail of a
 paper-kite, at the end of which hangs his possi-
 ble arbitrary system. "It is possible," in his
 opinion, "electors may be corrupt—it is
 "possible the elected may betray their trust—
 "it is possible a system of reciprocal corruption
 "may take place between them and a bad mi-
 "nister—it is possible that by some means or
 "other the influence of the crown may be so
 "great as to enable this bad minister to gain
 "over both houses of parliament to his wicked
 "purposes—it is possible that under such circum-
 "stances the constitution may be undermined,
 "and civil liberty subverted by formality of law
 "—it is possible the bulk of the people, mistak-
 "ing the shadow of the constitution for the sub-
 "stance, may not be sensible of their danger
 "till they find themselves fretted and gal-
 "lied

“lied by the chains of slavery”—it is possible, no doubt, that things may be very bad indeed some time or other—but it is some comfort, however, to think, that it is only possible, not probable; that the period is remote, not near at hand; for if so, it is possible all this may never happen; before that day arrives the world may be at an end, and then, I hope, though it should be our lot to live under absolute monarchy, we shall be secure and happy. This probably the Doctor may think rather a forlorn hope; and it must be confessed, it is by no means clear, though he talks of a *future* arbitrary system, though he trust the period is at a great distance, that his concern for his country’s good has not already realized these terrors to his imagination; for in his string of possibles he has unfortunately adopted the language of modern patriots, and enumerated those very evils which they declare to be not remote, but at our very doors, not future, but present, as having actually come upon us. What then are we to think of the Doctor’s comfort, which he has still in store, that “the people at last will not degenerate from the blood of their ancestors, but with united hands and hearts, drag forth to condign punishment, the most pestilent of all traitors, the traitors against the constitution and the common safety?” What are we to think, but that it will be bloody comfort

fort, root and branch work indeed? For King and Ministers, Lords and Commons, the electors and the elected, are all made parties in the possible mischiefs. And when the Doctor's old friends, who once "brought the nation, as he "told us, under a more debasing and deplorable "servitude than ever it had experienced under "the most arbitrary of its princes," are the administrators of this punitive justice, the remedy may be worse than the disease; and as they are likewise the judges when it is necessary, there is no knowing how soon they may chuse to begin. But seeing it may be for the sins of the people that wicked rulers are set over them, perhaps the Doctor as a divine, had better have recommended repentance than rebellion for the cure of such evils.

"Whenever this melancholy scene shall take "place amongst us, that the legislative and executive authority shall (tho' not in name and "appearance yet), in effect and reality, become "united in the same person" (at the distant prospect of which every friend of liberty must, in the Doctor's opinion, shudder with horror, he, good man, judging of others feelings by his own) "government, he says, will not want "men to support its pretensions with the shadow "of reasoning." Surely the legislative and executive authority being united as one man in their

their acts and operations, which is "in effect
 "and reality" the sum total of the Doctor's
 melancholy scene, divested of its colouring, does
 not seem a reason why government should not
 be supported in its pretensions, nor why it
 may not be done by solid argument. The *sha-*
dow of reasoning is for the most part on the
 other side of the question. Whether those who
 undertake its defence will use precisely the same
 arguments that the Doctor has put into their
 mouths, may be doubted; for, most likely, he
 would in prudence urge only such as he conclud-
 ed he was able to overthrow. Be that as it will,
 he is clear that "there may be a tyranny of
 "the whole legislature as well as of one of its
 "members;" and whenever that happens, of
 which the people are to judge, he has "no doubt
 "in asserting their full right to resume the reins
 "of government into their own hands, to lop off
 "the rotten gangrened members, and to purge
 "the corruptions of the body politic in any
 "manner they shall think most meet." But are
 the people themselves free from the influence of
 every corrupt passion, do they always judge
 righteous judgment? If not, what security have
 we that they will not abuse their power, and how
 shall we be benefitted by the change? It was
the people that murmured against Moses and
 Aaron, accusing them of the death of Korah
 and

and his company, when God himself, by visible judgments had destroyed them for their rebellion. Did they then judge righteous judgment, and would the Doctor on that occasion have had the reins of government taken out of the hands of Moses and Aaron, and put into theirs? It was *the people* who assembled at Ephesus, at the call of Demetrius, the silversmith, and who were in a great wrath with Paul for saying, that “they be no Gods which are made with hands;” the assembly was confused, some cried one thing and some another, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. Does the Doctor think that they were a proper tribunal, before whose inquisition Paul and his companions ought to have stooped with reverence? admirably qualified indeed are *the people* to judge what is tyranny, when to take and how to hold the reins of government! If the Doctor object against these being the people, though one does not see how he should, then, who are the people? In regard to our own state, to be sure, he has resolved the question rather differently; but whether to satisfaction, I pretend not to determine; he leaves us to collect who are the people, by pointing out to us who are not the people, his modesty, for certain reasons, not suffering him to speak out plainer. “A few factious incendiaries, the indebted discontented
“dregs

"dregs of a nation" are not the people: "such
 "interested leaders of opposition as make a
 "trade of their abilities" are not the people.
 He hopes no one will so purposely mistake his
 meaning as to accuse him of asserting it. The
 arch-patriot and his myrmidons, the empty de-
 clamers and their admirers, are all excluded. As
 to administration and its creatures, they are en-
 tirely out of the question, it is not to be suppo-
 sed they can be the people. Who then can be
 the people? Who can they be, but the *Regius*
Professor himself, his patron the *Duke*, and a
 few more equally choice spirits? This party and
 the other party may call themselves the people,
 but it is no such thing; the Doctor and his asso-
 ciates, they and they only, themselves being judg-
 es, are really the people. They are "the tri-
 "bunal, before whose inquisition the majesty of
 "the legislature ought to stoop with reverence.
 "To them is it ultimately accountable for the
 "execution of its trust;" and happy is the na-
 tion, that the supreme power is lodged in such
 safe hands. But rulers beware, look well to your
 ways; for "God forbid," says the Doctor "that
 "our governors should so far neglect their duties
 "as to make it necessary for them to sit in judg-
 "ment upon their conduct, for the people's ver-
 "dict is usually written with the sword and re-
 "gistered in blood." But God forbid, say I,
 that our governors should at any time so far ne-
 glect

gleet their duty as to prefer popular applause to the public welfare, or be deterred, through fear of faction, from enforcing obedience to the laws; and God grant that the people, (the Doctor and the Duke, with others like minded) may so far consider their duty as patiently to abide in their several stations, and be subject to them that have the rule over them *not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.*

Knowing these terrors of the people, it was friendly however in the Doctor to persuade “us
 “all to deliberate and hesitate, to count the cost
 “and weigh the expected benefit, before we, by
 “word or deed, blow up into a flame to consume
 “the land, that fire of civil discord, which God,
 “as a punishment for our infidelity and immo-
 “rality, has suffered to be already kindled.” If he had followed the advice himself, instead of puffing and blowing with all his might to raise this flame, his sincerity would have been less questionable; but perhaps he did first deliberate and hesitate, “he counted the cost” of laying waste the conscience, “he weighed the expected benefit” to be received from his patron in return for it, and upon the whole thought it no *foolish exchange*. Be that as it may, there can be little doubt, notwithstanding the Doctor’s professions of good will, that his intention was to leave on the minds of the people impressions very unfavourable to government. He imputes to the
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the *Stuart* family a design of subverting the constitution; and to create jealousies that a similar plan is now carrying on by the King and the three Estates in conjunction; he assures us there may be a tyranny of the whole legislature as well as of one of its members, and intimates that the times of Charles the First, and the present, are extremely parallel. “Those,” he says, “who entertain high notions of the omnipotency of Parliament” (an invidious term of the Doctor’s, the better to cast an odium on the supreme authority) “will see no resemblance between the causes which brought on the dissensions then and now: and will not therefore trouble themselves with apprehensions of a similar catastrophe.” Whatever resemblance there may be between the causes of dissension, certainly, so long as perfect harmony subsists among the several branches of the legislature, there is not the same reason for apprehending the like danger now as then; of this, we may presume the faction themselves sensible, from their unwearied endeavours to set them at variance, by instigating the King to act in opposition to his Parliament, and from their manifest chagrin at not being able to succeed in their diabolical purpose. “Others,” the Doctor is of opinion, “will think there is no difference except in this, that it was a part of the nation which then resisted the King, because
cause

“cause he would have taken from them their property without their consent given by themselves or their representatives ; and now it is a part of the empire which resists the legislature for the very same reason.” One of these *others* (the Doctor will know whom I mean), whether he really think the causes similar himself or not, is very industrious, for the sake of the *good old cause*, to represent them in such a manner as to lay the blame of the present commotions on the government, and to justify the Americans in their rebellion. Nothing can be clearer than this to any one who will compare the late declaration of the Continental Congress with the sermon (as it is called) of a certain *Régius Professor* ; they are so alike, one would be tempted to suspect that the sermon was the original, and the declaration the copy.

That there is a striking resemblance, however, between the times of Charles the First, and the present, will be readily allowed ; but in both instances we must look for other causes of the dissensions than those assigned by the Doctor. It is observed by the noble and faithful historian, that “ for twelve years immediately preceding the troubles of that reign, the nation enjoyed the greatest calm and the fullest measure of felicity that any people, in any age, for so long a time together, were ever blessed with. And for a complement of all their blessings, they were enjoyed

"joyed by, and under the protection of a
 "King, of the most harmless disposition, the
 "most exemplary piety, the greatest sobriety,
 "chastity, and mercy, that any Prince had been
 "endowed with, and who might have said that
 "which *Pericles* was proud of, upon his death-
 "bed, concerning his citizens, That no *English*
 "man had ever worn a mourning gown through
 "his occasion. But all these blessings could only
 "enable, not compel them to be happy; they
 "wanted that sense, acknowledgment, and va-
 "lue of their own happiness which all but they
 "had, and took pains to make, when they could
 "not find themselves miserable." So that,
 whatever the Doctor may pretend, the froward-
 ness of the people, not the tyranny of govern-
 ment, was the cause of that rebellion. The fo-
 menters of the present disturbances in America,
 are the descendants of those "cruel and unrea-
 "sonable, those violent and blood-thirsty men"
 (to use the language of our excellent church "by
 "whom the innocent and blessed martyr was
 "barbarously murdered;" they are bone of their
 bone, and flesh of their flesh. They also were
 happy, *bona si sua norint*, in a state of uninterrupt-
 ed peace, prosperity, and security; and to their
 fulness, not their want; to the blessings they en-
 joyed, not to the grievances they suffered, is to

be imputed their present unnatural rebellion. When *Jesburun* waxed fat, then it was he kicked. They are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts ; and what the historian says of their ancestors, may, with equal truth, be applied to them. “ They are more troubled and “ perplexed at what they call the violation of “ one law, than delighted or pleased with the ob- “ servation of all the rest of the charter ; never “ imputing the increase of their receipts, revenue “ and plenty, to the wisdom, virtue, and merit “ of the crown, but objecting every small im- “ pofition to the exorbitancy and tyranny of the government.” And as in the great Rebellion, the dates of the respective commissions, for raising forces, proved that the war was not begun by the King ; so in the present Rebellion, it is evident, beyond contradiction, that while government laboured for peace, the Americans were making ready for battle. These truths, in regard to both Rebellions, must have appeared clearly enough to the Doctor, had not he run so greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, accommodating himself, without reserve, to the inclinations of his patron. Was he a volunteer in the service on the 29th of May ; or did the Chancellor, by virtue of his authority, lay his commands on him—*Come, curse my government ; come, defy the ministry ?* Balaam, indeed, said, he

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could

could not go beyond the word of the Lord his God ; our prophet is not so fastidious, he has gone far beyond it. Yes, the thorough-paced politician must presently laugh at the squeamishness of his conscience, and read it another lecture.

But methinks it is high time to take our leave of the Doctor. We have attended him through all his windings and turnings ; his principles we see are all stark naught ; and did not many strange things happen in the world, it would be matter of surprize, how he came to be advanced to his present station ; how he, who knows so little of his Bible, as to assert that God never gave one man dominion over another, should be made *Professor of Divinity* ; how he, who maintains that his Sovereign is depofable by the meanest of his subjects, should be made REGIUS PROFESSOR. If the censure here passed on him, for broaching such heretical doctrines before the University, be the heaviest he meet with, he may bless his stars ; for his punishment will be much lighter than he deserves.

Suppose, by way of conclusion, we were to remind the Doctor of what he seems to have forgotten throughout his whole discourse, and address him in the words of his text : Remember, Doctor,—*Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power ? Do that which is good, and*
thou

thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. Remember likewise—If thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Excuse me, my good friend, for introducing the Doctor to your acquaintance, and believe me to be

Ever yours, &c.



